



# Long-term Forest Practices Applications

For Small Forest  
Landowners

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
**Natural Resources**

**Doug Sutherland** - Commissioner of Public Lands

Caring for  
your natural resources ...  
now and forever

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# Introduction

Washington's forest practices rules allow a landowner to get an approved forest practices application, commonly called a permit, which is valid for two years, and in certain cases up to five years. Applications are renewable under certain conditions. The two-year permit works well for those who frequently conduct forest practices such as timber harvesting and road building. Landowners who harvest small volumes of timber and harvest infrequently often find that the application process can be complex, time consuming, and challenging.

To ease the paperwork burden and allow more flexibility in timing harvests, small forest landowners may apply for a Long-Term Application that is valid for up to 15 years. To prepare for a longer time period, landowners will need to plan further ahead than the typical permit requires, while the flexibility will allow landowners to react quickly to changing markets and unforeseen events such as forest health problems or weather related disturbance.

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# Is a Long-term Forest Practices Application Right For You?

Every landowner's situation is unique and most will need help in planning for the long-term and in completing the application forms. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) foresters are available to explain the long-term application process, guide you in conducting your resource and roads assessment, and help you to complete application forms. To request assistance, contact the DNR Region Office nearest your property. There is a list of Region Offices at the back of this booklet.

You will need to collect resource and roads information in order to complete the application form. The amount of advance work needed depends on the amount of land involved, your knowledge of resources in the application area, your knowledge of road requirements, the number and type of natural resources on the property, and the type and location of proposed activities. There may be a need to hire professional help, especially for complex proposals. It takes a minimum of 90 days to receive an approved long-term application.



DNR foresters can guide you through the application process.



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# Application Process

A long-term forest practices application is submitted and reviewed in two steps.

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## Step 1:

- Inventory and classify all the natural features such as streams, wetlands, and unstable slopes, and mark sensitive sites such as springs within the application area. Assess road conditions to identify work needed to keep soil from entering water.
- DNR foresters review the information with help from other agency and tribal personnel. DNR has 45 days to complete the Step 1 review.
- After the DNR forester completes necessary site visit(s) and agrees that all of the natural features are identified and properly classified, you may submit Step 2 of the application form.

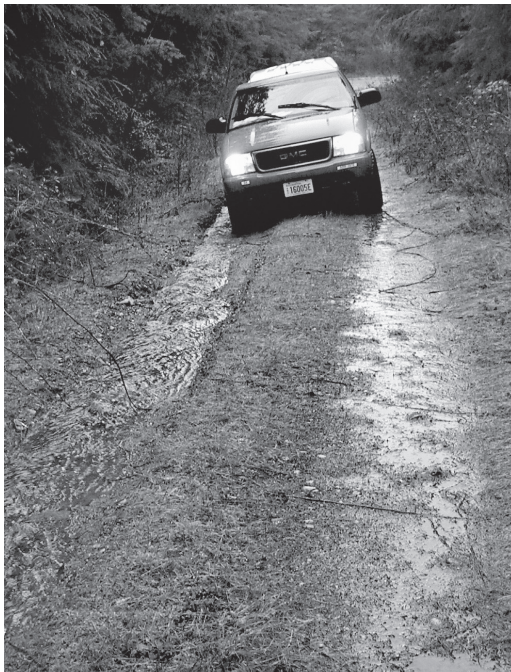


Classifying natural features is a critical part of Step 1.

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## Step 2:

- Describe all of the activities that might be conducted during the requested time period and show the location of the proposed activities on a map. You are not required to include a detailed harvest schedule.
- Representative samples of the riparian management zone and wetland management zone boundaries must be marked on the ground.
- You may choose to follow the standard forest practices rules for the entire application area, or propose an alternate plan for all or part of the application area. In an alternate plan, you propose forest practices activities that vary from the standard forest practices rules, in order to achieve more management flexibility. The protection to public resources provided in the alternate plan must at least equal the protection provided by the standard rules, and must contain specific information listed in the rules. An optional Alternate Plan Form and a booklet entitled *Alternate Plans for Family Forests* contain information to help landowners prepare an alternate plan. The booklet and the form are available on the DNR website at <http://www.dnr.wa.gov/sflo/> and from DNR Region Offices. An alternate plan is submitted as part of the forest practices application.
- DNR staff reviews the proposal and either approves, approves with conditions, or disapproves the application within 45 days.



A road assessment  
is a needed part  
of Step 1.

When the application is approved and you want to conduct an approved activity, send an Activity Notice Form to DNR at least five days before beginning the operation. The form contains basic information, such as a map showing the area of operation, the operator, parcel number, and volume to be harvested. You will also need to describe how features are marked on the ground; for example, cutting boundaries, sensitive sites, riparian management zone, wetland management zones, and new road construction.



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# Preparing to Submit a Long-term Application

Thorough preparation is the key to obtaining an approved long-term forest practices application quickly and at the lowest cost. Here are some suggestions:

- Gather all the information you have about your property including:
  - Maps and aerial photos
  - Previous and current forest practices applications
  - Stewardship plans
- Ask a DNR forester to meet with you to discuss your plans and needs. The forester will help you:
  - Understand the application process
  - Access resource information from DNR's databases
  - Account for cultural resources
  - Assess wildlife habitat
  - Plan the field work that will be necessary
- Using the application form and instructions as a guide, complete the field work to gather the necessary application information.
- Ask the DNR forester to review your Step 1 paperwork before sending it to the Region Office. Catching errors at this stage will save time. The forester can also review your Step 2 paperwork before you submit it.



Without an alternate plan, landowners need to leave standard riparian and wetland buffers.

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# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Is there a limit to the amount of land that can be included in a long-term application?**

There is no size restriction. You may submit a forest practices application that includes planned forest practices activities on all or part of your ownership within a DNR geographic region.

## **What happens if I want to make changes to my approved long-term application?**

As with other forest practices applications, substantial changes require a new application. The forest practices forester may authorize your written request for minor changes. In some cases you may need to add an activity on your land that is not included in your long-term application. In this case you'd need to write an additional application for the new activity.

## **Can a landowner include an alternate plan as part or all of the long-term application?**

Yes.

## **I may want to build a home on my property in the future. Can the home site area be included in the long-term application?**

No. Long-term applications cannot include areas that will be converted to non-forestry use.

## **Do I have to allow staff from agencies other than DNR or tribal representatives on my land?**

The forest practices rules require DNR to conduct the Step 1 review in consultation with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Ecology, and the affected tribes. Consultation can take many forms. If DNR determines that a site visit is necessary, denying access to a tribal or agency representative could result in DNR not validating Step 1 of the application. If an alternate plan is part of your application, the forest practices rules require that representatives of the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Ecology and the affected tribes be invited to participate in an Interdisciplinary Team review of your proposal. If you choose not to allow staff from these organizations on your property, your application cannot be approved.

## **Is the landowner required to be present for site visits?**

While it is not required that you are present at the time of site visits, your presence is preferred so that you can ask questions and supply any information that the forester may need. DNR will notify you in advance of the site visit date(s).



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**Aside from the longer permit term and the application processing procedure, are there other special rules for long-term applications?**

No. All other rules apply to long-term applications.

**Since the long-term applications are effective for 3 to 15 years, who determines the effective term of the application, the landowner or DNR?**

The landowner proposes the effective term on the application and DNR honors the landowner's requested term.

**With this two-step application and approval process, when does an applicant pay the application fee and when does the application form get numbered?**

The applicant pays the application fee when submitting the Resource and Roads Assessment (Step 1). At the same time, DNR assigns a Forest Practices Application (FPA) number for tracking and approval. The forest practice application number is how DNR tracks your application, so it's valuable for you to keep track of that number for future use in asking questions or accessing information.

**A landowner may not have all the information about cultural resources, or threatened and endangered species locations and/or critical wildlife habitat. Is there help available?**

Landowners are encouraged to work with DNR, the Department of Ecology, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and affected tribes to get the necessary information. The landowner may then ask a DNR forester to review the form for completeness before sending the form to the DNR Region Office.

**With sufficient information, the forest practices application is also an application for the Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) needed for work in or over water. HPAs are only valid for five years, while the long-term application may be valid for 15 years. How does this work?**

Landowners should plan to complete hydraulic projects within five years after receiving a valid permit. Otherwise, landowners will need to apply for a new HPA through the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**Can I include application of aerial chemicals in my long-term application?**

No. You must submit a separate application form for aerial chemicals. Aerial chemical applications are valid for two years.

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**How is the roads assessment in Step 1 different from the large forest landowner Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plan?**

Large forest landowners are required to identify roads on their entire ownerships and schedule maintenance on a priority basis. The long-term application assessment requirement is to identify roads in the application area, not on the entire ownership. The assessment requires a prioritized listing of maintenance, rather than a specific schedule.

**Can long-term applications be renewed?**

Yes. Renewals are effective for two years, however, forest practices rule changes may occur in the meantime that could make information in your long-term application inconsistent with the new rules. In this situation, you would need to complete a new application.

**A long-term application can be valid for up to 15 years. If rules change during the permit period, do I have to follow the new rules?**

When the Forest Practices Board considers a rule change, DNR will analyze the effect of the rule change on long-term applications in relation to resource protection, and report to the board. The board will decide if it is necessary to place conditions on long-term applications to conform to the new rules.



Long-term applications will continue to protect Washington's Streams.

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# Where to Find Help

For a list of consulting foresters and suggestions for selecting a consultant, go to the Washington State University Cooperative Extension website at <http://ext.nrs.wsu.edu/forestryext/index.htm>.

Application forms and maps are available from the DNR internet website at <http://www.dnr.wa.gov/forestpractices/>.

DNR foresters are available to explain the long-term application process, guide landowners in conducting their resource and roads assessment, and help landowners fill out application forms. To request assistance, contact the DNR Region Office nearest your property.

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## Department of Natural Resources Region Offices

**Region Office Business hours are weekdays,  
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

### **Northeast Region**

225 S. Silke Road

PO Box 190

Colville, WA 99114

(509) 684-7474

[northeast.region@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:northeast.region@dnr.wa.gov)

**Counties:** Ferry, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens

### **Northwest Region**

919 N Township St

Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284

(360) 856-3500

[northwest.region@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:northwest.region@dnr.wa.gov)

**Counties:** Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom

### **Olympic Region**

411 Tillicum Lane

Forks, WA 98331

(360) 374-6131

[olympic.region@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:olympic.region@dnr.wa.gov)

**Counties:** Clallam, north half of Grays Harbor, Jefferson



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### **Pacific Cascade Region**

601 Bond Rd

PO Box 280

Castle Rock, WA 98611

(360) 577-2025

[pacific-cascade-region@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:pacific-cascade-region@dnr.wa.gov)

**Counties:** Clark, Cowlitz, south half of Grays Harbor, Lewis, Pacific, Thurston, Skamania, Wahkiakum

### **South Puget Sound Region**

950 Farman Ave. N

Enumclaw, WA 98022

(360) 825-1631

[southpuget.region@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:southpuget.region@dnr.wa.gov)

**Counties:** King, Kitsap, Lewis, Mason, Pierce

### **Southeast Region**

713 Bowers Road

Ellensburg, WA 98926

(509) 925-8510

[southeast.region@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:southeast.region@dnr.wa.gov)

**Counties:** Adams, Asotin, Benton, Chelan, Columbia, Douglas, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Kittitas, Klickitat, Skamania, Walla Walla, Whitman, Yakima

